

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT[281]

Notice of Intended Action

Proposing rule making related to community college education and providing an opportunity for public comment

The State Board of Education hereby proposes to amend Chapter 21, “Community Colleges,” Iowa Administrative Code.

Legal Authority for Rule Making

This rule making is proposed under the authority provided in Iowa Code section 256.7.

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rule making implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code chapter 260C.

Purpose and Summary

Items 1 and 2 propose amendments to align the Department’s administrative rules to two policies established by the Higher Learning Commission, the regional accrediting body for postsecondary institutions. The first policy sets the required general education credits in career and technical education programs at 15 credits. The second policy allows for integrated, embedded, interdisciplinary models of general education in career and technical education programs. The amendments in Items 1 and 2 to paragraphs “d” and “e” of subrule 21.2(9) increase the general education credits in the associate of applied arts and associate of applied science award options from 12 credits to 15 credits and establish a framework for consistency in identifying and documenting general education learning requirements integrated into career and technical education programs.

Items 3 and 4 propose revisions to Chapter 21 to accommodate the establishment by community colleges of specialized programs of study, referred to as transfer majors, within general associate of arts and associate of science degree options. New rule 281—21.3(260C) in Item 3 and the amendment to paragraph 21.4(2)“a” in Item 4 will ensure consistency in the development and approval of transfer major programs.

Proposed new subrule 21.4(4) in Item 6 implements a recommendation of the Developmental Education Work Group, a Department-convened entity consisting of community college stakeholders tasked with developing strategies to achieve the Future Ready Iowa goal that 70 percent of Iowans have some form of postsecondary training by the year 2025. Accordingly, the strategies identified by the group will increase success in developmental education coursework and the likelihood of completing a postsecondary credential. Item 5 rennumbers existing subrules to accommodate the addition of new subrule 21.4(4).

Fiscal Impact

This rule making has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

Jobs Impact

After analysis and review of this rule making, no impact on jobs has been found.

Waivers

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rule making would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the State Board for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 281—Chapter 4.

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit written or oral comments concerning this proposed rule making. Written or oral comments in response to this rule making must be received by the State Board no later than 4:30 p.m. on June 26, 2018. Comments should be directed to:

Nicole Proesch
Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building, Second Floor
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146
Phone: 515.281.8661
Email: nicole.proesch@iowa.gov

Public Hearing

A public hearing at which persons may present their views orally or in writing will be held as follows:

June 26, 2018	State Board Room, Second Floor
11 a.m. to 12 noon	Grimes State Office Building
	East 14th Street and Grand Avenue
	Des Moines, Iowa

Persons who wish to make oral comments at the public hearing may be asked to state their names for the record and to confine their remarks to the subject of this proposed rule making.

Any persons who intend to attend the public hearing and have special requirements, such as those related to hearing or mobility impairments, should contact the Department of Education and advise of specific needs by calling 515.281.5295.

Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rule making by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rule making at its [regular monthly meeting](#) or at a special meeting. The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

The following rule-making actions are proposed:

ITEM 1. Amend paragraph **21.2(9)“d”** as follows:

d. Associate of applied science (AAS). The degree is awarded upon completion of a state-approved program of study that is intended to prepare students for entry-level career and technical occupations. An associate of applied science degree shall consist of a minimum of 60 semester (90 quarter) credit hours and a maximum of 86 semester (129 quarter) credit hours. The general education component of the associate of applied science degree program shall consist of a minimum of ~~42~~ 15 semester (~~48~~ 22.5 quarter) credit hours of general education and shall include at least one course from each of the following areas: communications, social science or humanities, and mathematics or science. A maximum of 3 semester (4.5 quarter) credit hours of the required 15 general education credits may be documented through an integrated, embedded, and interdisciplinary model adopted by the chief academic officers of the 15 community colleges in consultation with the department. The technical core of the associate of applied science degree shall constitute a minimum of 50 percent of the course credits.

ITEM 2. Amend paragraph **21.2(9)“e”** as follows:

e. Associate of applied arts (AAA). The degree is awarded upon completion of a state-approved program of study that is primarily intended for career training in providing students with professional skills for employment in a specific field of work such as arts, humanities, or graphic design. An associate of applied arts degree shall consist of a minimum of 60 semester (90 quarter) credit hours and a maximum of 86 semester (129 quarter) credit hours. The general education component of the associate of applied arts degree program shall consist of a minimum of ~~42~~ 15 semester (~~48~~ 22.5 quarter) credit hours of general education and shall include at least one course from each of the following: communications, social science or humanities, and mathematics or science. A maximum of 3 semester (4.5 quarter) credit hours of the required 15 general education credits may be documented through an integrated, embedded, and interdisciplinary model adopted by the chief academic officers of the 15 community colleges in consultation with the department. The technical core of the associate of applied arts degree shall constitute a minimum of 50 percent of the course credits.

ITEM 3. Adopt the following **new** rule 281—21.3(260C):

281—21.3(260C) Associate of arts and associate of science transfer major programs.

21.3(1) General program. Each community college shall offer a general college parallel program of study leading to an associate of arts award or an associate of science award, pursuant to subrules 21.2(9) and 21.4(2). These programs shall offer courses equivalent to the first two years of a baccalaureate program and shall not be discipline-specific.

21.3(2) Transfer majors. A community college may establish discipline-specific transfer major programs to improve student recruitment, advising, and success and enhance transferability of associate-level courses into aligned baccalaureate degree programs. The transfer major program shall consist of discipline-relevant credits from an approved discipline framework which satisfies the requirements of paragraph 21.3(2)“b.” A community college shall ensure all students are appropriately advised regarding the availability, structure, purpose, and other pertinent information related to the transfer major program.

a. Degree option. A transfer major shall be embedded within an associate of arts or associate of science degree which meets the requirements of this chapter and any applicable statewide transfer agreement between the Iowa community colleges and public universities. Credits within the transfer major may be utilized to fulfill the general education requirements of an associate of arts or associate of science degree, as appropriate.

b. Discipline framework. Each approved transfer major program shall adhere to the appropriate adopted discipline framework to ensure transferability with the aligned baccalaureate program of study at one or more public universities in Iowa.

(1) A discipline framework shall consist of a minimum of 18 discipline-relevant semester credits (27 quarter credits) that align with a framework of elements based on accepted practices of an aligned baccalaureate degree program of study at a public university in Iowa.

(2) The courses within the discipline framework shall articulate with a regionally accredited public university in Iowa so that the course credits are recognized by the university as fulfilling equivalent course requirements in at least one aligned baccalaureate degree program of study.

(3) If the requirements of subparagraph 21.3(2)“b”(2) cannot be achieved with at least one regionally accredited public university in Iowa, a request may be submitted to the department for articulation with a regionally accredited public institution in a contiguous state or a group of no less than three regionally accredited private postsecondary institutions which confer baccalaureate degrees, are based in Iowa, and are approved under Iowa Code chapter 261 to operate in the state of Iowa.

(4) The discipline framework shall be developed and adopted by a statewide committee convened by the department.

c. Use of term. Consistent with department guidance, each community college shall exclusively use the term “transfer major” to record the completion of an approved transfer major program on the student’s official transcript and other academic records, publish in the college catalog, and market the transfer major program to current and potential students and the general public. A community college

shall not transcript, catalog, or market an associate of arts or associate of science program using other terms which contain or are synonymous with the term “major” or which imply a specialization within a subject area.

21.3(3) Approval. Per Iowa Code section 260C.14, each transfer major program shall be submitted to the department for approval utilizing the state system for program management. Approval shall be obtained prior to the enrollment of students in the transfer major program. The approval process shall not include components specific to career and technical education program approval, including advisory committees and labor market analysis.

21.3(4) Reporting. Each community college shall comply with data reporting requirements established by the department. The department shall produce and make available a report detailing enrollment and outcomes of participants in transfer major programs.

21.3(5) Effective date. The requirements of this rule shall take effect beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year. In implementing the provisions of this rule, the department shall consult key stakeholders including, but not limited to, representatives of Iowa’s community colleges and public universities.

ITEM 4. Amend paragraph **21.4(2)“a”** as follows:

a. This program shall offer courses that are the equivalent of the first two years of a baccalaureate program and may also include: such courses as may be necessary to develop skills that are prerequisite to other courses and objectives; ~~and~~ specialized courses required to provide career options within the college parallel or transfer program; and approved transfer major programs meeting the requirements of 281—21.3(260C). College parallel or transfer programs are associate of arts and associate of science degree programs. General education courses in college parallel or transfer programs are required to be college transfer courses. A follow-up of students terminating shall be conducted to determine how well students have succeeded and which adjustments in the curriculum, if any, need to be made.

ITEM 5. Renumber subrules **21.4(4)** and **21.4(5)** as **21.4(5)** and **21.4(6)**.

ITEM 6. Adopt the following **new** subrule 21.4(4):

21.4(4) Developmental education. Students who enter community colleges underprepared for postsecondary coursework are provided opportunities to improve their cognitive and noncognitive skills via developmental education academic and student support services. In an effort to enhance these opportunities, while respecting the local authority of Iowa’s community colleges, each college shall adopt proven developmental education strategies to identify and address the needs of students, shorten the time to completion, prepare students for academic success, and reduce the financial burden for students underprepared for postsecondary coursework. Such proven strategies include, but are not limited to, multiple measures of placement; accelerated and integrated strategies, such as co-requisite models; and support services that address students’ cognitive and noncognitive needs. These reform efforts require collaboration among community colleges, school corporations, and education stakeholders to systemically expand proven strategies to prepare students for postsecondary success.